THE MCGILL DAILY

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Dentistry doesn't make the grade, says work group

by Susan Vivian

An important university work group declared the McGill Dental Faculty academically unacceptable last Tuesday.

"The academic performance of dentistry is not consistent with the university's expectations," said Dean Leggett, spokesperson for the work group.

The Academic Policy and Planning sub-committee meeting was the first of a series considering a proposal to close the Dentistry Faculty. The work group spoke in favour of the proposal.

Work group members said that the Dentistry Faculty was too expensive and did not produce enough research. Specific arguments put forward in favour of closure included:

•insufficient money brought in through grant awards, particularly in comparison to other faculties

•fewer graduate students than the University average

•the assumption that such meagre graduate and research levels would result in a unacceptable quality of undergraduate education

•probable loss of status as a degree granting institution due to outdated clinic facilities, which would cost the University $6 million to replace

•the need for $3 million to finance a new clinic, as the current one in Montréal General will be closed due to space demands at the hospital.

A similar proposal to close Dentistry was voted down a year ago. But after the university adopted the Task Force on Priorities report last spring, the proposal was reintroduced, said Leggett.

The Task Force, a ten year plan for the university, places a strong emphasis on research, graduate students, and publishing. Work group members claim the Dentistry faculty no longer meets these standards.

When the retroactive application of Task Force standards were challenged, Dean Leggett responded "It may be a retro-fit, but the Task Force has changed the attitude of the University, and has been accepted by the community."

Ralph Barolet, Dentistry Dean, argued that the work group's criticisms did not take into account the special nature of the Dentistry faculty. Dentistry faculties across North America generally do not have graduate programs. And most dentistry research is done in medical institutes, not dentistry schools.

Barolet also questioned the reliability of many of the reports and statistics which the proposal for closure cited.

Dentistry representatives said they had not been given a copy of the report until the evening before the day of the committee meeting, leaving them little time to prepare questions for Dean Leggett.

Dentistry representatives also questioned the procedures used by the university administration to close the faculty.

Sub-committee members also questioned whether they had the jurisdiction to make decisions on financial matters.

The Dentistry Faculty will present their case on October 8th.

Dentistry students protested outside the building during the sub-committee meeting.

PHOTO CREDIT: BELINDA BIGOLD

Peta Tancred, director of McGill Womens' Centre

Women's studies change key: minor to major

by Shannon Aldinger

Students may be able to major in Women's Studies next year.

McGill's Centre for the Research and Teaching of Women has submitted a proposal to establish a 90 credit interdisciplinary Women's Studies major in the university.

The university currently offers a 24 credit minors program, which can be combined with a major in Arts, Science or Management.

According to Peta Tancred, Sociology professor and director of the centre, the minors program is not enough.

"First, there is a huge amount of literature which has been produced as a result of the 'second wave' of feminism," said Tancred, "The richness of the literature is difficult to get through in just twenty-four credits."

"Furthermore, many students want to continue in women's studies at the graduate level. They need more preparation at the undergraduate level."

"We're far behind other Canadian universities if we don't provide this type of opportunity for students. At least a dozen other anglophone universities across Canada have programs like this."

The program has already been approved by the Curriculum Committee of the Faculty of Arts, and the Faculty itself. Tancred hopes it will be considered by the Academic Priorities and Planning Committee within the next two weeks. If it receives approval there, it will be channelled to the university Senate.

Finally, the proposed program will be considered in Québec City by the National Assembly. This is standard procedure.

According to Tancred, the centre will need to develop a Women's Studies seminar if the program is approved. Otherwise, the centre will not develop any additional courses because course development generally does not fall within its jurisdiction.

Tancred says the only resistance the program has encountered is of a financial type. According to Tancred, due to the interdisciplinary nature of the proposed program, no department provides for it in its budget.

"I know it's not an easy time to introduce new programs which inevitably cost additional funds."

Tancred believes McGill may be able to solicit the required money from a provincial government reserve fund which finances the development of new courses.

Although Tancred originally hoped the program would be offered by September 1992, she believes January 1993 is now a more likely target.

City garbage won't rot

by Dave Ley

The city of Montréal has threatened an environmental group with legal action after the group lambasted the city's garbage composting program. Nature-Action, a St. Bruno-based group, labelled the city's program as inneffective and accused the city of selling inappropriate composters to Montréalers.

"What the city is selling does not speed up decomposition, as a composter is designed to do," said Edith Smeesters, spokesperson for Nature-Action.

But city spokesperson Lily Robert said "we designed the composting programmes for the needs of Montréalers. We put three years of research into this project and chose these models because of their final result: Good compost."

"We are not living in St. Bruno," added Robert, "the composters are more appropriate for the needs of Montréal residents."

According to Smeesters, the city's two composters were never designed for composting.

"The Green Cone was never marketed as a composter. It was designed to be used only as a digester: to reduce waste, not to compost. The other composter is too impractical to use as a composter."

A letter from the city's legal firm two weeks ago demanded that Nature-Action "stop all distribution of false information relating to the distribution of domestic composters." The letter also warned Nature-Action that it would be responsible for damages caused by their criticisms.

But Smeesters said the city has since cooled off on its legal posturing.

"They are getting much more friendly," said Smeesters.

Originally, the city's legal firm sent two warning letters to the group. But according to Robert, the city did not plan any further actions against Nature-Action.

"We want to make sure there is no action in court. Nature-Action has a right to its opinion," said Robert.

Smeesters expressed concern that the city's choice in composters would set a trend for other municipalities.

"We are worried that if Montréal's program is copied and people find they can't compost, they will become disillusioned with the notion of composting. We are worried that this incident will give composting a bad name," said Smeesters.

The city is selling a limited number of composters at $18 each. The price is subsidized by the city and the province.

INSIDE: WON'T YOU BE MY LABOUR?

The first in a series on the state of the Labour Movement in Quebec and Canada

page 5

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Neat streets don't come cheap

by Kim Beauregard

City hall is rolling out the red carpet.

The Doré administration recently unveiled plans to spend over $300 000 repaving a sidewalk in granite and the opposition is fuming.

"This exorbitant would-be expenditure is yet another testiment to the administration's negligence of residential neighbourhoods, in favor of promoting the downtown area as an ultra high-rise heaven," said opposition councillor Marvin Rotrand.

The controversial sidewalks are in front of the Museum of Fine Arts and its new extension. The venture will cost the city an estimated $336 408, more than double the cost of conventional cement.

"The money would be better spent on refurbishing library and recreational facilities, and repaving roads in residential neighbourhoods," said Rotrand.

But city representatives have said the granite will make the downtown district more appealing to tourists.

"The investment is worth it economically, considering that each tourist spends on average $200 per day while in Montréal," said executive committee member André Lavallée.

And architects at the Museum are enthusiastic about the proposed granite sidewalks. Marcel Chouinard, public relations officers for the museum's new extension, said the use of granite is justified because it blends in perfectly with the new structure.

The city has admitted that the choice of granite over cement was a decision based on aesthetics. But Rotrand said the "yuppie look" can hardly be considered a factor capable of influencing potential tourists.

"While granite is a somewhat more durable material than cement, the difference is so marginal that it's not at all cost beneficial," he said.

"Showy projects like the granite sidewalks are symptomatic of the Doré administration as it prepares for the city's 350th anniversary in May of 1992," said Rotrand.

The budget for the festivities was originally estimated at $54 million. But the federal government's funding withdrawal and the lack of financial support from Montréal's business community have foced the City to revise the anniversary's agenda.

"Activities will most definitely have to be cut," said Rotrand. "Montréal's 350th may well prove to be Mayor Jean Doré's Olympic Games."

The city spent $7 million last spring to repave De La Commune street in Old Montréal. Granite sidewalks were also installed.

Inquest disappoints

by Catherine Jheon

As the coroner's inquest into the shooting-death of Marcellus François enters its second week, some black community members have questioned the validity of the entire process.

"The inquest has no teeth," said Dan Phillips, head of the Black Coalition in Québec. "The system protects the police."

Last summer police shot François in his car while conducting a search for attempted murder suspect Kirt Haywood. The shooting immediately sparked charges of racism in the police force. François was unarmed, and bore little resemblance to Haywood, except that both men were black.

Tape recordings played at the inquest of conversations between surveillance team members contained numerous racist slurs. Officers continualy referred to the suspect as "nègres" and "tam-tam."

The inquest also discovered the police surveillance team used photocopies of a fax of an out-of-date photo to track Haywood. The photocopies were creased and showed Haywood much darker than he is.

Despite strong evidence of sloppy conduct, the Montréal Urban Community police won't be judged, said Phillips.

"The Coroner's report is useless, because the police don't have to follow its recommendations."

Dissenters fail to organize

by Lynn Chaiken

Concordia students chose to stay home in droves, rather than discussing a controversial gay safe-sex article at open forums. The article, entitled "Just Do It", was printed in this year's Concordia student handbook.

Only one student at the two forums complained about the article, according to Concordia student Phil Toone. "It was a timid response. The students who are upset aren't organized," he said.

Supporters of the handbook outnumber the opponents, said Lana Grimes, an executive member of the Concordia students' society (CUSA). She called the absent objectors "invisible and silent."

CUSA co-presidents, Charlene Nero and Eleanor Brown, received letters of praise from two Montréal organizations.

"It is unfortunate this one page has become the object of negative response," wrote Act Up member and Montréal Mirror columnist David Shannon. "This should in no way overshadow the commendation that the editors of the CUSA handbook should receive."

And Michael Hendricks, Treasurer of Lesbiennes et Gaies Contre la Violence, wrote, "Stories like these de-mystify our sexuality for ourselves and for others. And, most important, wide circulation increases the chance of communicating to those who need motivation and models for practicing gay safe sex."

The Gazette reported that petitions against the safe sex article were being circulated on campus. But CUSA said no petition had yet been received.

WON'T YOU BE MY LABOUR?

Au Bas de L'échelle battles workplace oppression

by Ivy Lam

Eduardo Segual, a machinist in a metal parts factory, is having problems at work. His boss is planning to either lay off a few workers or to cut down on production hours and implement a work sharing plan. Either way, his job's future is uncertain. Does he have a choice?

Au Bas de L'échelle is a community group which informs non-unionized workers on their rights in the workplace and campaigns to improve working conditions. Members include non-unionized workers in the service and manufacturing sectors, students, artists, and the unemployed.

Francine DeGrandpré, a coordinator at Au Bas de L'échelle, said the organization has an important role.

"We bring together non-unionized workers and give them a voice. We break each member's isolation. Together, we can act collectively to improve workers' rights."

To workers like Segual, services offered by Au Bas de L'échelle have been invaluable. When he was laid off from his last job, Au Bas de L'échelle helped him get the severance pay his boss "forgot" to give him.

Over half of Québec's labour force is non-unionized. Like Segual, many are immigrants, poorly educated, and unskilled. Often, these workers are unfamiliar with their rights.

Officially, the Québec Labour Board regulates non-unionized workers' rights and working conditions. But DeGrandpré said, "Provincial law provides a minimal outline of basic rights and unacceptable conditions."

As an example, DeGrandpré cited Québec's standard minimum wage. A worker with a full-time job earns $3000 less than Québec's poverty line of $14 000.

Au Bas de L'échelle has applied constant pressure on the government to raise the minimum wage. Their campaigns met with success in 1985, 1987, and 1988.

The group also addresses problems of particular concern for non-unionized women workers such as sexual harrassment, maternity leave and the dead-end nature of traditional employment.

Au Bas de L'échelle fought for the right to maternity leave and got results when the benefit became mandatory in 1978.

However, DeGrandpré said women still face job insecurity when they take their maternity leave.

"The current legislation does not adequately protect women. Some still face job demotion or get fired "for other reasons" when they take their maternity leave."

Au Bas de L'échelle is independent from government agencies and receives its funding in part from membership.

Below are answers to frequent questions asked by non-unionized workers to the Au Bas de L'échelle staff:

• Work-sharing is better than being laid off.

• Deducting 15 minutes of salary for being 3 minutes late is illegal.

• A worker cannot refuse overtime except for family or medical obligations.

• If a job is held for more than four years, an employer must supply a valid reason for firing.

• Overtime salary must be paid for hours worked beyond 44 per week.

• Transferring overtime hours to subsequent work periods is illegal.

• Salary must be paid at least every 16 days.

• A woman cannot be fired for being pregnant.

Au Bas de L'échelle offers consultation in person or by telephone. The group also organizes free meetings with lawyers. For more information, call 270-7878.

THE MCGILL DAILY

COMMENT

Root Canal

Students have lots of reasons to oppose the administration's attempts to close the Dentistry Faculty.

First, the administration has tried to close the Faculty using undemocratic procedures. And second, the administration has targeted Dentistry because the Faculty does not conform to a set of rigid standards of 'excellence'.

The university is ignoring its own internal principles of consultation and power-sharing. And it's overlooking the vital role the McGill Dentistry faculty plays in the Montréal community and beyond.

Funding issues are at the root of the closure proposal. The administration claims it will save money if it closes Dentistry. But more importantly, the administration believes that Dentistry contributes nothing to its long term fund-raising plans.

The administration wants to deal with the university debt by raising large amounts of money from the private sector. It plans to pour money into programs of 'high international quality' and under-fund or cut others. That means the donating private sector can influence which programs are deemed important.

That's why the administration is selectively overlooking the Dentistry faculty's long record of community service. These issues simply don't fit present private sector concerns like productivity or technological innovation.

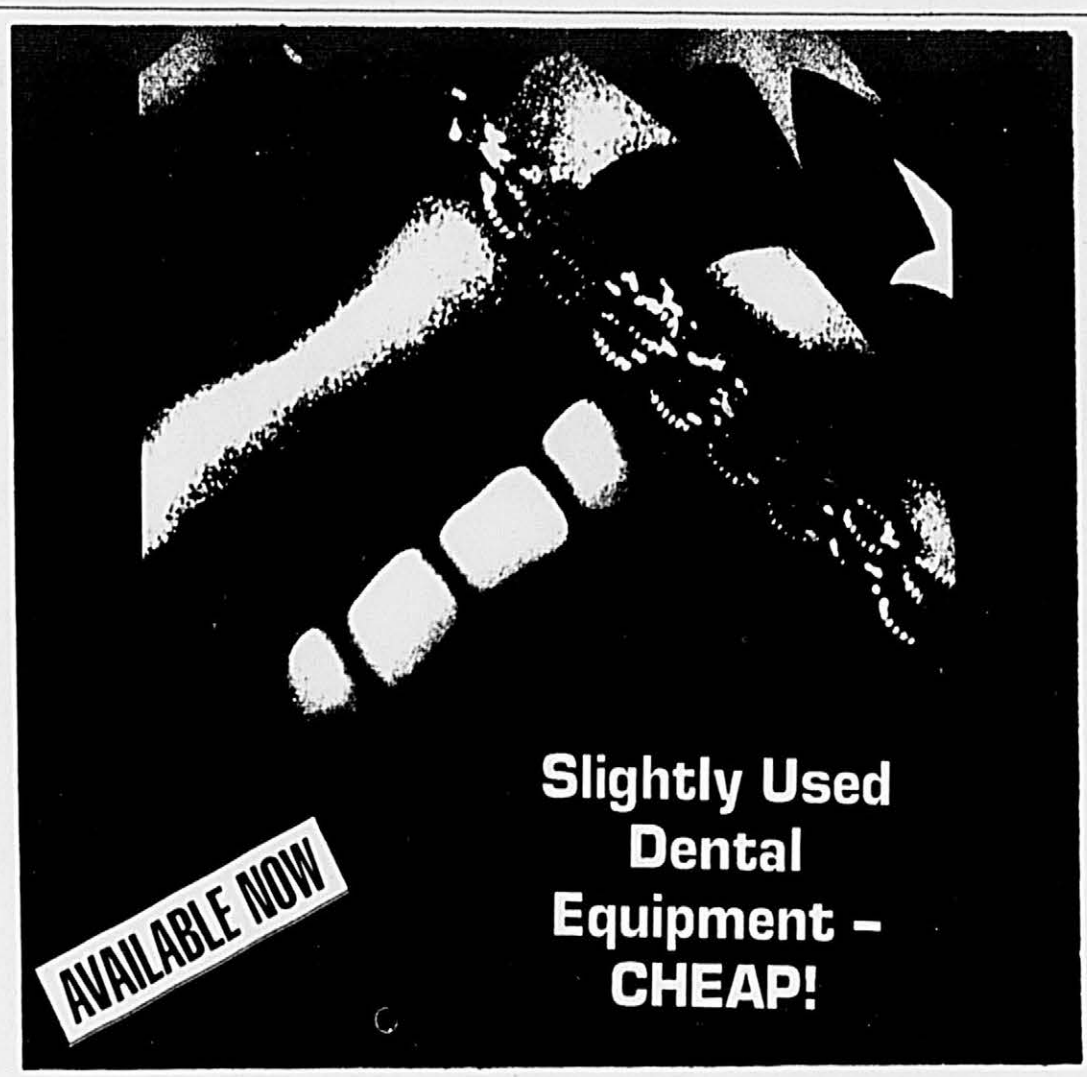
The long term implications of this philosophy for education are devastating. We need to preserve universities as places where social values and power relations can be examined and questioned. To prevent this critical voice from being smothered, we must reevaluate our priorities. Perhaps we need to reconsider our entire approach to higher education.

Students' Society announced last Thursday that it opposes the procedures used to close the Dentistry Faculty. It's a step in the right direction, but it doesn't address the central issues.

Students need to question not only the procedures, but also the principles behind the closure plan. We need to act immediately to stop the Dentistry faculty from closing.

But we also need to discuss long term solutions to McGill's funding crises, or Dentistry will only be the first of many to go. You could be next.

Alex Roslin
Fiona McCaw
Robin LeBaron
Susan Vivian
Katerina Cizek



LETTERS

Open letter to T. Myers

Dear Ms. Myers,

Thankyou for your letter of September 12, 1991.

It is true that the McLennan-Redpath Library has proposed that graduate student loans become two-week rather than four-week loans, but this proposal was made in the context of coordinating circulation practices across the Library System. At least three of the HuSSAL Libraries already have two-week loans for graduate students (Education Library, Management Library, and Library and Information Studies Library); this system seems to work well and is based on the premise that there are simply not enough books for the demand (attributable, in large part to lack of book funds.)

It was in this context that McLennan-Redpath was considering a change to a two-week loan. While our collection is larger, the demand of graduate students is proportionally similar. Before a final decision is made, we decided to have McLennan-Redpath experiment with telephone renewals— for all categories of users, including graduate students— and the new arrangement has been working since September 2. A report at a management meeting on September 19 indicated that it is working quite well and staff are able to handle it. The experiment will continue. If it is implemented in practice, it would mitigate the loss of the four-week loan for graduate students. If the book is in demand by another user you would have to return it after two weeks, in any event, it could be renewed indefinitely. In effect, this involves an increase in service to graduate students.

We are concerned about inconsistencies in circulation practices across the Library System, and the clear message that we have been getting from graduate students in the past is: make your practice consistent amongst libraries.

In the meantime, our evaluation of practices continues and involves libraries in Health Sciences, Physical Sciences and Engineering, and Law. We are not about to make any quick and arbitrary decisions. I assure you that there will be further consultation before any policies are finalized.

I hope this explanation is satisfactory.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eric Ormsby
Director of Libraries

Don't print anything

To the Daily:

We as McGill students are fed up with *The McGill Daily*. This paper, which proposes to represent the interests of McGill students, seems only too content to print nothing worthwhile and print it in incredible quantities. Day after day one can read about how the information kiosk costs $24 000, which I think everyone knows by now. Therefore it is no surprise that so many issues remain unread in their boxes. We wondered what happened to those papers and after some investigation we discovered that 15 000 issues of the *Daily* are printed yet under 5 000 are ever read. What happens to the rest of these papers? Are they at least recycled? Apparently not, and no one seems to have the answers. If you can't find any real news then don't print anything. After all, aren't we the students paying for it?

Josh Abiscott
U1 Physiology
Ngana Andrew-Mziray
U2 Economics

Stooping for gifts

To the Daily:

I was surprised by the large-scale whining by the *Daily* regarding the increase in the rent it pays to the SSMU. Is this the same *McGill Daily* that not long ago criticized the administration of McGill for accepting $700,000 from Hydro-Québec for the establishment of a chair of environmental ethics? By the same logic, such a "great" paper like *The McGill Daily* should not stoop to the same level of accepting free goods or services from "evil incarnate," the SSMU.

The Daily already charges all students $6.70 and rakes in a sizable amount in advertising revenue, resulting in a surplus of $250,000 last year, according to *The Tribune*. If the *Daily* wishes to be independent from the SSMU, it should deal with the SSMU in a businesslike fashion. *The Daily* should not be receiving free gifts of office space. *The Daily* can easily afford to pay a fair amount for its lease, and it should do so.

Sincerely,
Emmanuel Chomski
U1 Chemistry

To the Daily,

Just who the hell is Pierre J. Rouge and who does he think he is fooling?

In his letter of Sept 23 he makes a number of asertions. The most offencive ofwhich is that somhow Shamir and Arafat are the same man. Perposterous! If Mr. Rouge were better informed he would know that Shamir is really nobdy and Arafat is Ringo Starr. The noses, man! Look at the noses. Any body can fake short, look at carl p wilson III or Colin Krivy.

As to Mr. Pierre J. Rouge, who is alegedly a U4 Drama student, who is he really? This is my fourth year in Drama and I've never met him.

The Drama department is just not that big.

Who is he?

What does he want?

Pierre LaRocque
U4 Drama

ed. note: The Dailys actual circulation is 14 000, this year. As for your "5 000 read" figure, we'd be very interested in knowing where your information comes from. Neither the Daily nor its distributors have ever compiled such information.

ed. note: The Trib got it wrong. Our surplus last year was $44 562. This year, the Daily business manager is projecting a deficit of $14 415, due to rent which is $14 524.

ed. note: B. Prendiville, Dahlia Scheindlin, Charles Weiger and Sam Buggeln: your letters are all way too long. Please come down and cut, cut, cut.

Charon Ttocs, keeper of the river Styx, we need your name, faculty and year before we print your letter. Paddle down to the office and show us your ID.

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contributors
Ivy Lam, Kim Beauregard, Dave Ley, Catherine Jheon, Lynn Chaiken, Shannon Aldinger, Susan Vivian, Janine Luce, Belinda Bigold Daniel Koffler Mike Stamm

Editorial Offices: 3480 McTavish, room B-03 Montréal, Québec H3A 1X9 telephone (514) 398-6784
Business and Advertising Office: 3480 McTavish, room B-17 Montréal, Québec H3A 1X9

co-ordinating editor: Alex Roslin
co-ordinating news editor: —
news editors: Peter Clibbon, Robin Le Baron
layout and design co-ordinators: —
daily français: Anick Goulet
photo editor: Katerina Cizek
culture editor: Doug McDonald
science editor: —

Daily fax: (514) 398-8318

business manager: Marian Schrier
telephone (514) 398-6790
advertising managers: Boris Shedov, Olga Kontozissi
telephone (514) 398-6791
advertising layout and design: Rob Costain

WON'T YOU BE MY LABOUR?

The Daily investigates the future of the organized labour movement — Part One

Build beyond membership, union leader urges

By Alex Roslin

Unions spend more of their time reacting than acting, says Fred Sweet.

Many unionists want to lend their voices to political battles, and help develop alternative economic policies for the country, says the long-time Montréal trade union activist.

But, Sweet says, unions are often preoccupied with narrow issues related to wages and coffee breaks. In this, unions betray the interests of their own members. They also do the struggle for democracy in Canada no good, he says.

Fred Sweet is vice-president of the 70 000-member Conseil Central de Montréal, a regional branch of one of Québec's largest unions, the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux.

Daily: Are unions becoming more political in response to the economic and political crises in Canada?

Sweet: Absolutely. The union movement feels its role is to lead — to point out alternative economic policies. Since 1982, when the MacDonald Commission recommended free trade with the U.S., the entire Canadian union movement has set itself up in opposition to deregulation of the economy, and to privatization of government services and to free trade.

Unions have responded in various ways, by lobbying against free trade and so on.

Are unions just asking for the status quo, then? How are unions responding to all the changes in the world economy? Even Sweden is deregulating its economy.

One of the main functions of unions is to develop alternative policy for the economy. People don't always know that the business agenda isn't the only one available.

But, right now, our efforts are fragmented. The game plan is often decided more by the Coke and chip sales in the stands than the situation on the field.

One problem is that in unions you're dealing with people who say seniority is important, job protection is important, wages are important. And everything else is interesting and important to these people — but not *as* important.

I love my membership, but if I put on my hat as a one-step-removed observer, I would say the revolution is a long way from the hearts and minds of the membership.

There is an overwhelming willingness to protect the status quo at the expense of a minor willingness to experiment with the future.

Why don't the union members resist more, do you think?

Well, we do what we can. That's always the bottom line.

But if it were up to me, unions would spend a lot more time on defending the weakest link in society, and that is part-time and unemployed workers. We shouldn't forget that the great numbers of the unemployed are the main obstacle to social progress.

And that's the issue CUPW raised in their recent strike. They wanted to increasing rural delivery of mail by bumping part-time workers to full-time.

Yes, in fact, when you get to contract-level issues the general trend everywhere is to try and bump up part-time workers to full-time.

It may seem like a petty demand for a union to make, or even a selfish one during a recession. But this is the tactical way of working against the strategic problem of massive unemployment and underemployment.

We feel the demand of full employment is a direct challenge to the conservative capitalist agenda.

As much as "one person-one vote" is a revolutionary demand in South Africa, capitalism in North America will not tolerate full employment. They must have 25 per cent unemployed and another 25 per cent part-time to keep the system going. That's their vision.

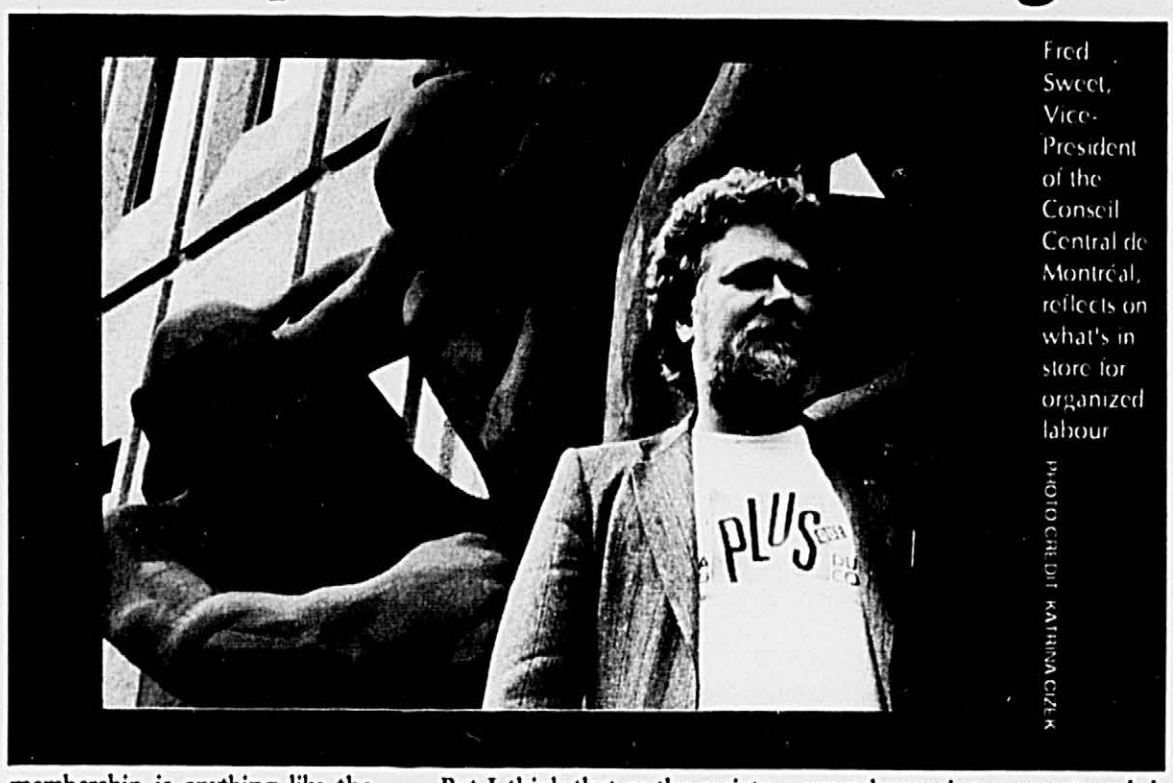
The agenda of Canadian unions is increasingly becoming dominated by these three principles: opposition to contracting out, support for full employment, and reduction of the work week.

How about the idea of worker participation in management?

That's a stronger issue in Québec. An important goal for the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux is increasing workers' knowledge about the corporations they work for, and also opening up management decisions. This includes opening up the internal minutes of the employer to scrutiny by employees. Last year, for example, we were successful in acquiring the right for health and social workers working for the province to be apprised of the annual master plan of their ministries.

You said unions should give more support to the "weak link." Do you think this includes people in marginalized communities — First Nations' peoples, women, African-Canadians, gays and lesbians?

Unions are ignoring their fundamental mission if they don't participate in the crises in these various communities. Especially in an urban area like Montréal, if your membership is anything like the larger population. Trade unionists profoundly believe in the philosophy which says, "an injury to one is an injury to all." By helping the most deprived people in society, unionists come to their own aid.



Fred Sweet, Vice-President of the Conseil Central de Montréal, reflects on what's in store for organized labour

PHOTO CREDIT KATRINA GIZEK

But if that's the philosophy, why weren't unionists very active against the war in the Gulf, or during the Oka crisis? Why do unions represent mostly white men?

It's not that unions represent mostly white men, but more that the union representatives are usually white men.

And this happens because the democratic process inside unions is very similar to the process in the larger society — it reinforces racial and gender discrimination. People's mindsets are determined by the cultural hegemony of capitalism.

Internal democracy in unions also suffers because of the culture of inaction which prevails in liberal socities. Direct democracy is like a rainy day in Arizona; there isn't very much. The lack of participation by unionists in their own unions directly hurts the unions' strength.

But it also looks like unions in Canada don't have good prospects for organizing new workers. There are no new industries where workers can rebuild their strength. Meanwhile, the large public sector unions are losing members as services are contracted out.

I don't have a quick answer to this problem. You're absolutely right. That is the challenge of world capitalism.

You really learn something if you ask people: Who do you believe more? Your boss, or your union? Most will say: "My boss."

People aren't following their own interests because of the way the media shapes people's perceptions. People won't work together to build something new.

But I think that as the society becomes more polarized economically, people will start to figure out whose side they are on.

Québec unions seem very proud of recent attempts to organize more women workers in the service sector. Is the record really so good?

There have been some positive efforts, but again the record isn't very good at all.

The issue of women employed in the service sector is important for unions to understand. This is the area where unions haven't been very successful in organizing workers. In the public sector, about 85 per cent of workers are in unions. In the service sector it's about 15 per cent, even though this is the area where unions are most needed, because the work is often really exploitative.

Do you see that nationalist questions in Québec add or detract from the union movement?

The challenge is to make people realize that progressive social change and independence are two sides of the same coin. The way forward for the working class of Québec is through independence.

Connected to this, I think there's a great need for a third political party in Québec, to present a progressive option to the two business parties. The Québec trade union movement is nationalist in a socially progressive way.

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2:00—3:00 Wednesday, October 23, Room 433

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St. Martha's In the Basement is an interdenominational eucharistic worship service. Open format. In place of "sermon" we usually have discussion. Thurs. 7 p.m. United Theological College Basement. 3521 University Street.

SCM stands for Student Christian Movement. SCM is part of an international federation of Christian students involved in the struggle for justice and peace. We are looking to re-establish a group at McGill. Interested? Please leave your name with McGill Chaplaincy (4104) or come in person to the Newman Centre, 3484 Peel.

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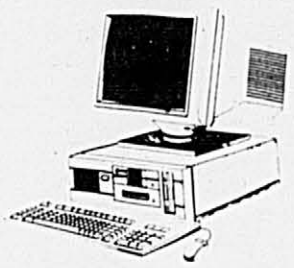

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